

APRIL 2024

# Ready. Set. Grow!

CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER



## **CAMBRIDGE** Office of Early Childhood

The mission of the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is to **connect** the city's early childhood ecosystem, **align** early childhood services and information, and **advocate** for and **advance** the needs of all young children, their families, and the early childhood workforce.

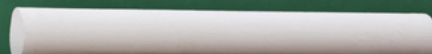
The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is a collaboration supported by the City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools.



[www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org](http://www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>WHAT WE'RE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH!</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>COACH'S CORNER: CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS WITH MOVEMENT</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>A MONTH TO CELEBRATE EARTH</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>FLYERS &amp; ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>UPDATES FOR THE FIELD</b>	<b>9-10</b>
<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>VISIT THE OEC <u>WEBSITE!</u></b>	<b>13</b>
<b>THE OEC TEAM</b>	<b>14</b>



# A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Cambridge Early Childhood Community,

Happy April! I am excited to kick off this month by celebrating the National Association for the Education of Young Children's - Week of the Young Child! In alignment with this national event, the Office of Early Childhood will be hosting its 4th Annual Week of the Young Child event. We will kick the week off on Saturday, April 6th at 9am at Harvard, where we will host a networking event, followed by amazing, in-person professional development opportunities. This year will again be a hybrid event, with our in-person day being followed by a variety of virtual workshops held throughout the week.

I want to share a huge THANK YOU to our community partners and friends of OEC who will be facilitating workshops this week. I also want to thank the OEC team...some of whom are hosting sessions, facilitating workshops, or working diligently behind the scenes to bring things all together.

NAEYC has some amazing resources for those of you who want to continue the celebration in your own programs. I encourage you to check them out [HERE!](#)

In partnership,



Dr. Lisa Grant, Executive Director



**DR. LISA GRANT**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF  
EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**CELEBRATE DIVERSITY  
MONTH**



**NATIONAL ARAB AMERICAN  
HERITAGE MONTH**



**APRIL 2  
INTERNATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S BOOK DAY**



**APRIL 2  
WORLD AUTISM  
AWARENESS DAY**



**APRIL 5  
NATIONAL SELF CARE DAY**



**APRIL 21  
NATIONAL KINDERGARTEN  
DAY**



**APRIL 22  
EARTH DAY**



**APRIL 24  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROFESSIONALS DAY**



**WHAT WE'RE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH!**

## CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS WITH MOVEMENT

Dear Educators,

Our March Creative Explorations PLC was dedicated to using **movement** in process-based art and sensory experiences. We shared a magical evening filled with joyful experimentation, collaboration and creativity. We explored with power, speed and motion, noticing the intersecting disciplines (art, geometry and physics), opportunities for schemas and developing learning dispositions. We would like to thank the Harvard Yard Community Children's Center for graciously hosting us!

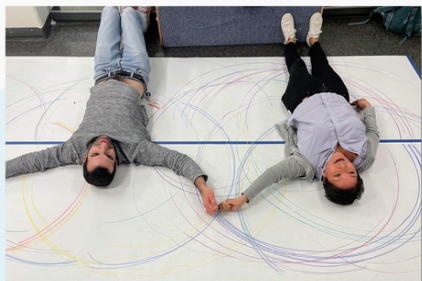
## ART AND SENSORY INVITATIONS

### Ramp painting

We offered tempera paint with golf balls, a wooden ramp lined with paper and added paper on the floor and wall so we could observe the trajectory and impact.

We experimented with the incline of the ramp and were excited to notice the variation in speed and direction and the trail and splash at the bottom.

In your classroom you could use the sensory table's lid, recycled cardboard or gutters for the ramp. You can also experiment with different kinds of balls (tennis, sensory, or dryer balls), with vehicles and even small pumpkins!



### Large body circle drawing

We offered a large surface of paper and chunky pencils for experimenting with making large with the rotation of our arms. People tried laying on their backs and on their bellies, rolling and alternating sides, alone or navigating the space with a partner. Then one educator thought to offer her skateboard and see how sliding while making marks felt.

In your classroom, you could try this in the same way or on a large wall surface using crayons, markers, pencils or even use chalk while outside!

# COACH'S

Cambridge Office of Early Childhood  
Coach's Corner

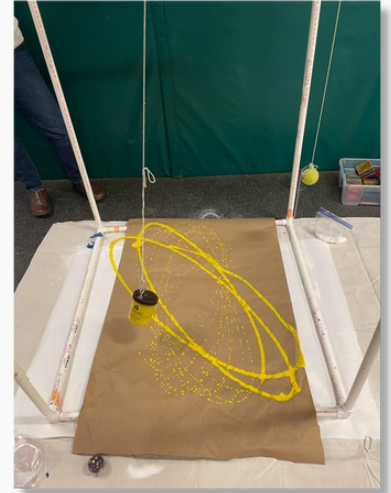
# COACH'S CORNER

## Pendulum Art

We offered a large PVC structure with different options for testing out a pendulum. We took our time to experiment with trajectory and force and started by knowing over magnetic tile structures. We then moved on to mark making and tested out using salt and tempera paint.

This was a collaborative effort which required testing and adjusting. It was fascinating to see the variations based on the angle of the rotation.

In your classroom, there are many ways you can make a simple pendulum. One way is by placing a broomstick between two chairs, securing it with tape, adding string and a paper/cardboard cone with the bottom cut off to make a funnel. Sand, salt, thin paint are all items to explore. Tying a ball to the center string also creates opportunities to explore.



“The first task in teaching for creativity in any field is to encourage people to believe in their creative potential and to nurture the confidence to try.”  
-Ken Robinson

“I move, therefore I am.”  
- Haruki Murakami

## Lazy Susan Spin Art

We offered large wooden Lazy Susans with drawing materials and smaller metal ones with colored salt and texture materials.

This was the most soothing experience, lending itself to a relaxing sensory activity and the opportunity for calmer conversation. We noticed variations in speed depending on the resistance caused by the friction of the drawing materials. The smaller ones were faster and lent themselves to smooth out the sand and explore making circles and spirals with the combs and paintbrushes.

You can find Lazy Susan's in second hand stores and in stores with a dedicated houseware section. Perhaps you can try using paint or watercolors?



CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS WITH MOVEMENT

## A Month to Celebrate Earth



**H.E.A.L.**  
*Healthy Eating, Active Living*

Earth Day is Monday, April 22, 2024, and we can celebrate all month long by introducing key concepts such as planting, composting, and recycling with our young friends. It is a perfect time to raise awareness of protecting our environment and to begin healthy habits in school, at home, and in the community.

- April is a great time to start seeds indoors. Cucumbers, beans, tomatoes, and herbs are easy options to try. The link with instructions for this [fun and easy eggshell seed starter activity](#) can be shared with teachers and families!
- Did you know that 40% of household trash consists of compostable food scraps? [Learn about composting in Cambridge](#) and how it helps combat climate change (and control rodent activity).
- Birds play an important role in our ecosystem and need nutrition, too. This [shareable, printable activity from NASA](#) uses cookie cutters, seeds, and gelatin to create bird feeders in fun shapes.

More tips for nutrition and staying active are available on the [resources page](#) at the Cambridge Public Health Department website.

Contact Brigitte DeVeau at [bdeveau@cambridgepublichealth.org](mailto:bdeveau@cambridgepublichealth.org) with questions or interest in this or other healthy eating active living projects.



Massachusetts Association for the  
Education of Young Children

Registration QR Code



# SPRING

## MINI CONFERENCE

EXPLORING THE WORLD OF STEAM  
APRIL 13 FROM 9AM - 3PM  
BOSTON NATURE CENTER IN MATTAPAN, MA

**Where:** Boston Nature Center, 500 Walk Hill St. Mattapan

**Keynote Presenter:** Sara Levine

Sara Levine is an educator, veterinarian, and award-winning author of STEAM books for children. She will speak about her experiences in writing science and math picture books. Topics will include how she chooses her subject matter; her writing process; and ingredients she uses to make books educational, engaging and funny. She will discuss how her books and others can be used by educators to teach STEAM topics to children in fun and interactive ways.

**Learn more and register [HERE](#)**



UPDATES

# FOR THE FIELD



## CAMBRIDGE Preschool Program

UPDATE



The application period for the **Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP)** is now closed for the **2024-2025 school year**. Families in need of application assistance should contact [cpp@cpsd.us](mailto:cpp@cpsd.us).

**If any families have a child eligible for the program and have recently moved to Cambridge, they can apply during the next enrollment period in Spring 2024.**

We encourage all families and providers to check our website for any updates regarding the program. If you have any questions or concerns about the enrollment process, please feel free to contact us at [cpp@cpsd.us](mailto:cpp@cpsd.us).

For additional information, including updated FAQs, please [visit our website](#).



CITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE



**The Center for Families  
Newsletter is now available!**

Inside you'll find information about a wide variety of resources and programs such as:

- Cambridge Dads + Activities
- Mindfulness Mondays
- Free resource bags for families in need
- Resources & Supports for families
- and more!

To read the latest CFF Newsletter  
[click HERE!](#)



UPDATES

# FOR THE FIELD



MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of  
Early Education and Care

## Department of Early Education & Care News



The Board of Early Education and  
Care meets monthly from  
September to June.

For meeting locations, or any  
additional information please call:  
EEC Main Office at (617) 988-6600

You can watch the meeting live on  
the Department's YouTube  
Channel [here](#).

[To view archived meetings click  
here.](#)

## LIKE & FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!



### Did you know we're now on Facebook?

Like & Follow the Cambridge Office  
of Early Childhood Facebook page  
so you can see early childhood  
updates, new resources, and  
helpful content we share on your  
favorite social media platform!

[You Can Find Us Here!](#)

or save the url below:

[www.facebook.com/cambridgeoec](http://www.facebook.com/cambridgeoec)

*Thank you for supporting our  
office!*

APRIL 2024

# UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



APRIL 2024



**Early Childhood Investigations | Multicultural Tools & Strategies for Nature-Based Program Leaders, by Ashley Brailsford, Ph.D.**

**Thursday, April 11, 2024  
2:00-3:30 PM ET**

*Presenter: Ashley Brailsford  
Sponsored by Unearthing Joy Together*

Operating nature-based programs centered on diverse cultural perspectives can be challenging but necessary to transform our early childhood spaces into inclusive places. Join Ashley Brailsford, founder of Unearthing Joy, for an overview of multicultural strategies and tools that create culturally centered curricula and programs.

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**



**Children's Trust | Family Support Fridays**

**Friday, April 5, 12, & 26, 2024  
10:00 AM-12:00 PM ET**

Join us for our Family Support Fridays webinar training series with experts in the fields of family support and parent education. This year's Family Support Fridays webinar series will host 11 sessions with topics ranging from:

- Working with immigrant families
- Identifying developmental delays in young children
- Positive discipline and parenting practices
- Understanding racial and generational trauma
- Engaging and celebrating families in our programs
- And more!

Register now to join hundreds of others discussing the latest and greatest in family support.

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(CONTINUED)



## Harvard Graduate School of Education | The Science of Early Learning and Adversity

**Wednesday and Thursday, June 5-6, 2024**

Where: Harvard Campus

Participants in The Science of Early Learning and Adversity (SELA) will develop skills and strategies that support the design and implementation of early learning environments that buffer stress, increase resiliency, and boost development.

In this two-day program, thought leaders will share the latest science that sits at the intersection of child development, education policy, and early intervention for children experiencing adversity. In facilitated follow-up discussions, participants will explore how this science can inform the supports they provide for adults and children.

**Registration deadline is May 8th!**

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**

# Need information on all things Early Childhood in Cambridge? Visit the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood website!

[www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org](http://www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org)



### Our Mission

The mission of the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is to connect the city's early childhood ecosystem, align early childhood services and information, and advocate for and advance the needs of all young children, their families, and the early childhood workforce.

### Our Vision

Every child and family in Cambridge has access to high quality early care and education experiences. As a result, all children enter school ready to thrive academically, physically, socially, and emotionally, and continue to do so through third grade and beyond.

[Learn More](#)



## What Information Can I Learn From The Website?

[www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org](http://www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org) is a one-stop-shop for the Cambridge community to access information and resources related to early childhood education and programs. The new website culminates a rebranding process for the Office of Early Childhood, formerly known as the Cambridge Birth to 3rd Grade Partnership. The website includes but is not limited to:

- Cambridge Preschool Program
- Child Care Resources
- Paying For Childcare
- Preschool Scholarships
- Early Learning & School Readiness
- CPS Programs
- Program Quality Improvement
- Educator Resources
- Professional Development
- Workshops & Trainings
- Career Pathways
- Announcements & Events
- Collaborating Organizations
- Publications
- Research & Evaluation
- Who We Are
- COEC Contact Information

Need additional assistance? Please email us at [earlychildhood@cpsd.us](mailto:earlychildhood@cpsd.us)

# MEET THE CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEAM!



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**School Readiness Coordinator**  
COMING SOON!



**Behavioral Health Specialist**  
COMING SOON!



**Evaluation Specialist**  
COMING SOON!